



# UNIVERSIDAD DE LA RIOJA

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El impacto del uso de metáforas y símiles en la conceptualización de las corporaciones: Un estudio basado en la película-documental "The Corporation"

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***El impacto del uso de metáforas y símiles en la conceptualización de las corporaciones: Un estudio basado en la película-documental "The Corporation", de SARA GONZÁLEZ DÍAZ***

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# TRABAJO FIN DE GRADO

## Título

**The impact of the use of metaphors and similes on the conceptualisation of corporations: A study based on "The Corporation" documentary film**

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## **Abstract**

This essay is devoted to the analysis of the different metaphors and similes that appear in "The Corporation" documentary. The whole study is aimed at investigating the use of linguistic strategies to create a discourse capable of highlighting the negative nature of corporations and their overall negative impact on the environment. This general objective is related to the tenets of Ecolinguistics, and the way in which language can be used to influence people's conceptualization of reality. The study comprises a total of twenty-six metaphors and similes, which are presented in data tables that include six analytical subcategories through which the meaning and effects of every metaphor and simile will be understood. The analysis is also divided into four semantic fields (people, objects, animals and processes) to facilitate the documentary's comprehension. Everything mentioned before reveals the conceptual nature of a documentary that enables viewers to see the real nature of corporations. It also shows how effective the use of metaphorical language can be in order to present the negative nature of an entity (i.e. a corporation) and its negative effects on the world.

**Key words:** metaphor, simile, Ecolinguistics, corporation.

## **Resumen**

Este ensayo está dedicado al análisis de las diferentes metáforas y símiles que aparecen en el documental "The Corporation". Todo el estudio tiene como meta investigar el uso de estrategias lingüísticas para crear un discurso capaz de destacar la naturaleza negativa de las corporaciones y su impacto negativo en el medio ambiente. Este objetivo general está relacionado con los principios de la Ecolingüística y la manera en la que el lenguaje puede usarse para influenciar la concepción de la realidad de las personas. El estudio consta de un total de veintiséis metáforas y símiles, que están presentados en tablas de datos que incluyen seis sub-categorías analíticas a través de las que se entenderá el significado y efecto de cada metáfora y símil. El análisis estará dividido también en cuatro campos semánticos (personas, objetos, animales y procesos) para facilitar la comprensión del documental. Todo lo mencionado anteriormente revela la naturaleza de un documental que posibilita que los espectadores vean la verdadera naturaleza de las corporaciones. También enseña lo efectivo que puede ser el uso del lenguaje metafórico para presentar la naturaleza negativa de una entidad (en este caso las corporaciones) y sus efectos negativos en el mundo.

**Palabras clave:** metáfora, símil, Ecolingüística, corporación.

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## **1. Introduction**

Language is one of the most powerful tools to create some effect on people. Depending on how we use language, it can have different consequences. This essay will be focused on the impact of language use on people. The study is centred in the analysis of the metaphors and similes that appear in "The Corporation" documentary. The analysis will lead us to different entailments in which the reader will be able to see the implicit meanings of these figures of speech. It is important to take into account the relevance of language to create either negative or positive discourses, and how big companies use a metaphorical language to reach certain purposes.

This work will be divided in different sections which are mentioned in the table of context above. Section 2 will be aimed at investigating previous studies related to the metaphorical use of language to create negative discourses. This section will also study the articles related to Ecolinguistics, because language has also a huge impact over the environment. Ecolinguistics is a recent area of study in charge of the relation between language and ecology. They are not related to one another, but the fact is that Ecolinguistics is a discipline that analyses the impact of language on the environment. As language configures our way of thinking, the way in which corporations sell their products can affect us directly; and the way we see and conceptualise corporations can also have an impact on our acceptance or rejection of their commercial practices.

Section 3 will explain the theoretical framework needed in order to understand every concept of this work. It will create the basis for the comprehension of the analysis in section 6. Then, section 4 will define the objectives and the methodology used to carry out the analysis of metaphors and similes. This analysis is based on a qualitative inductive methodology.

Before going deeply into the analysis section, there is one section devoted to the explanation of the corpus. The documentary and its main features will be described in section 5. After these previous parts, section 6 will analyse the metaphors and similes of "The Corporation" documentary. The analysis will be divided into four different subcategories that correspond to four different semantic fields used as source domains of the metaphors/similes involved. In every category, metaphors and similes will be analysed separately according to their negative and positive axiology, and all of them will be described in data tables including the relevant information to understand their entailments and their vitality. After the analysis section, by way of conclusion, we shall summarise implications and consequences of this study.





## **2. State of the art**

This section consists of two parts. The first one makes a succinct presentation of the present-day studies on our theoretical framework (Ecolinguistics). The second summarises some studies on the use of metaphors for presenting negative aspects of a particular entity in different types of discourse.

### **2.1. Previous studies dealing with Ecolinguistics**

The articles that will be analysed here deal with the field of Ecolinguistics. As it is known, Ecolinguistics is a new field of study aimed at investigating the role of language over the environment and its impact on it. The following authors have focused on how some companies make a bad use of language that has negative effects for the ecosystems.

Etzioni (2013) made a research on corporations and he made emphasis on the metaphor of corporations as communities. He wanted to highlight that corporations do not care about anything but themselves and their own success. This is something that we are going to see in the analysis of "The Corporation" documentary too. This behaviour is threatening to the environment because it results in damaging the planet.

The importance of Ecolinguistics and the good use of language in discourses is highlighted in Sedlaczek's essay (2016). This study is focused on making people aware of the importance of language regarding climate change. It is devoted to the analysis of television talks, and their impact on the difficult situation with the environment nowadays. Ebim (2016) also deals with this problematic issue, but his work is directed towards the oil industry.

All of the articles mentioned before are aware of the importance of language, and Ecolinguistics is in charge of transmitting this message to people. A good use of language is necessary because its impact on the environment is very high.

## **2.2. Previous studies focused on metaphorical analyses of the notion of 'corporation'**

The works that will be studied in this section are all devoted to the metaphorical use of language to achieve certain purposes of companies or corporations. Language is a very useful tool to attract people, and it is used to draw the consumers' attention.

The study of Ivantsiv (2018) is focused on five international cosmetic companies. These companies are depicted as organisms that provide people with everything they need, and they achieve their purposes through linguistic strategies. The most important tool is the conceptual metaphor, as happens with "The Corporation" documentary. Following Ivantsiv (2018:82) words, "conceptual metaphors are one of the most effective means of image formation". This is closely related to the work "Metaphor use in Chinese and US corporate mission statements: A cognitive sociolinguistic analysis" by Sun and Jiang (2014). It also talks about the effect of metaphors and how corporations use them to make their discourses more interesting. Both studies coincide in depicting these big companies as human beings. This also occurs in "The Corporation" documentary, and it is an intelligent strategy to humanise corporations and thus, make them appear as closer to people. So it can be asserted that CORPORATIONS ARE PEOPLE is a recurrent metaphor within the companies domain.

Stibbe's article (2013) also examines metaphors in "The Corporation" documentary, mainly the ones related to CORPORATIONS ARE PEOPLE. As we have seen above, this is a recurrent metaphor and corporations use it a lot. In the analysis section below (6), we are going to have a look at the entailments that metaphors and similes have. There are four different categories, and they all show how effective metaphorical language can be.

Ponton's essay (2015) is aimed at the analysis of metaphors regarding their effect on the environment. It is very close to Ecolinguistics because it is focused on how the use of metaphors in discourse affects the Earth and its ecosystems. Most multinational companies use environmental speeches, but they continue to use linguistic tactics to obtain the maximum benefit regardless the environment. This is one of the conclusions that will arise from the analysis of "The Corporation" movie as well.

### 3. Theoretical framework

This work will deal with metaphors and similes and their use within society. Before going deeply into the analysis of the documentary, this part will be devoted to explaining what a metaphor and a simile are.

Following the definition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica, a metaphor is a "figure of speech that implies comparison between two unlike entities, as distinguished from simile, an explicit comparison signalled by the words like or as." It is commonly assumed that metaphors only happen in literature and embellished speeches. However, as Lakoff and Johnson (1980:3) claimed, metaphors occur in our everyday language and we use them all the time without being aware of it. So we have to be conscious that metaphors are not as strange as we may think, they are always being used. The way in which we think, and also act, is based on metaphors and that is why we cannot live without them.

Metaphors come from a specific school of thought which is Cognitive Linguistics. Cognitive Linguistics began to develop in opposition to Chomskyan linguistics in the 1980s (Littlemore and Taylor, 2014: 1). The first conference of the International Cognitive Linguistics Association (ICLA) took place in Germany in 1989. Moreover, it was followed by the publication of the *Cognitive Linguistics* journal in the following year. This approach was created as a new way to study language and its uses, but nowadays, it implies a lot more. It deals with the implications of language, as well as with language learning processes. Cognitive Linguistics claims that the process of learning a language is similar to the process of acquiring other knowledge. There are two key authors in Cognitive Linguistics: George Lakoff and Ronald Langacker. They focused on the semantic aspect of language, and they dedicated their study to it. Following the theme of this work, the main contribution of Lakoff was the investigation about conceptual metaphors. He wanted to look for that type of metaphors beyond the abstract concepts we use and the way we think. One of the most outstanding conceptual metaphor was that GOOD IS UP and BAD IS DOWN (Littlemore and Taylor, 2014: 2). That is the reason why we can say that 'we are feeling *low*' or 'things are looking *up*'.

Cognitive Linguistics is not a unified theory, but a mixture of different approaches to study language. Nevertheless, all of these ways of investigating language share the attempt to describe language by means of cognition. This paper will be focused in one theoretical aspect called 'cognitive semantics'. This specific part of the theory deals with metaphors, metonymy, image schemas, etc. It also works with the non-arbitrary relationships within languages, and with meaning and conceptual schemas.

One of the most important principles of Cognitive Linguistics is related to language and cognition. This principle claims that the way in which we structure and organise language reflect the way in which we structure and organise cognition. This premise made Lakoff and Johnson establish the *Contemporary Theory of Metaphor* or *Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT)* (Littlemore and Taylor, 2014: 52-53).

There are three main points in the theory previously mentioned:

- The conventionality argument:

Metaphors are not only used in rhetoric and poetic language, as it may be commonly accepted. They are part of everyday language and it is used in most of languages and cultures around the world.

- The conceptual structure argument:

By means of metaphors, we understand one concept in terms of another. This reflects the way in which concepts are presented in our minds. That is why metaphors have not only a linguistic aspect, but also a cognitive one.

- The embodiment argument:

This is related to the nature of the source and the target domains. Source concepts are usually more concrete than the target ones, which are more abstract.

It has to be taken into account that conceptual metaphors can also be called cognitive metaphors. Within the field of Cognitive Linguistics, conceptual and cognitive metaphors are used for the same notion, we can use those names interchangeably.

From the cognitive perspective, metaphors imply the understanding of one conceptual domain in terms of another. For example we can associate love with a journey, and we would have the metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY. So we have that a conceptual domain A is a conceptual domain B (Kövecses, 2002:4). This previous explanation is also called conceptual metaphor, because it is made by two conceptual domains in which you understand one in terms of the other. These two domains taking part in a metaphor can be divided into source domain and target domain. The second one is the conceptual domain that is understood in terms of the source domain, which is from where we get the meaning. Source domains are likely to be more concrete and specific, whereas target domains are more abstract.

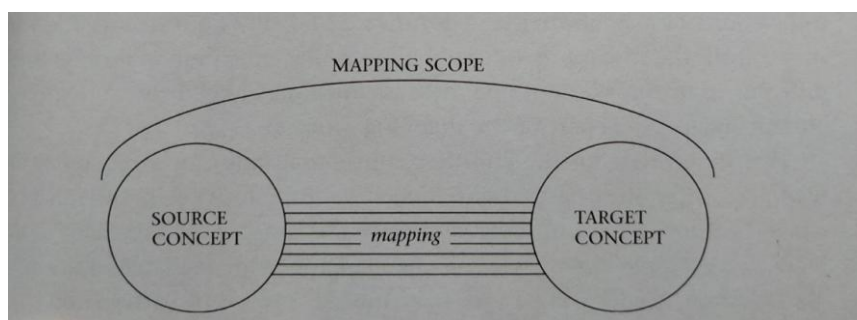


Figure 1. "Basic components of metaphorical mapping: source concept, target concept, mapping and mapping scope" (Ungerer and Schmid, 1996: 119).

We can see the main components of a metaphor in the image above. The target concept is the thing that is going to be explained in terms of the source concept. The mapping scope is the group of common characteristics between the target and the source concepts that permits their conceptual connection (Ungerer and Schmid, 1996:119). In the metaphor LOVE IS A JOURNEY, the mapping scope will be based on the image schema of 'path'.

Nevertheless, there should be a clear distinction between metaphor and metaphorical linguistic expression. Metaphors include all the metaphorical linguistic expressions regarding one specific topic. That means that a metaphor does not occur in our everyday language, it is the major concept that include all the expressions. For example, we can point out LOVE IS A JOURNEY. This is the metaphor which includes the metaphorical linguistic expressions such as "We are *at a crossroads*" (Kövecses, 2002).

Metaphors can be understood because there are certain correspondences between the source domain and the target one that make them be related. These correspondences and relationships are called mappings (Kövecses, 2002:6). We are going to continue using LOVE IS A JOURNEY as an example to illustrate these connections. The sentence mentioned above (We are at a crossroads) will show the relationship between the source and the target domains. This metaphorical expression means that a couple of lovers have to make some decisions to continue with their relationship, not that a traveller has to chose one way or another. Travellers and the journey are the source domain to explain the target domain, which is lovers and love.

In this previous example, the domain of journey structures the domain of love. We do not have the domain of love prior to the one of journey because it is this second one who gives the meaning to the first one. The concept of journey made this concept of love and established their similarities to build a metaphor.

Metaphorical concepts and the language we use to talk about them are systematic (Lakoff, 1980:4-9). They both follow patterns that are built by culture. There can be

differences in the way in which different cultures understand different metaphors. For example we understand arguments as wars, but there can be a society in which arguments are conceived as dances, so the metaphor is completely different, as well as the way of understanding it.

There is another distinction within the category of metaphor. There are primary and non-primary metaphors. Primary metaphors are those that emerge from the most basic experiences in the world (Hampe, 2017:99-100). They are thought to be universal, because the relation that they establish comes from the experience, e.g. MORE IS UP. However, non-primary metaphors do not imply an embodied relationship between the source and the target domain. They are cultural because there has to be an agreement among a society in which they structure concepts in a similar cognitive way, e.g. THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS.

Therefore, two types of metaphors can be distinguished: primary or correlation metaphors or and non-primary or resemblance metaphors. There are some more aspects which will help us to distinguish whether a metaphor is primary or not. They are directionality, ontology and conventionality (Grady, 1999:95). Correlation metaphors work in just one direction, whereas resemblance metaphors are not unidirectional. They function in either direction where a source can be the other's target. Grady exemplifies this notion with the metaphor DEATH IS SLEEP. This metaphor is present in Hamlet's "to sleep perchance to dream", but it also appears in reverse in the expression "dead to the world". Regarding ontology, primary and non-primary metaphors are completely different. As it is said in Grady's (1999:96) *A typology of motivation for conceptual metaphor*, "resemblance metaphors may involve correspondences between concepts of the same type, whereas correlation metaphors link concepts of different types." To finish, conventionality is another aspect that makes us differentiate between these two type of metaphors. Correlation metaphors are related to the experience that we have about the world. However, to understand resemblance metaphors, we have to use our cognitive tools to perceive the connection between the concepts involved in the metaphor (Grady, 1999:97). This happens in metaphors as the one mentioned above THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS.

To conclude, it is important to mention the importance of language. Communication, thinking and acting are based on the same conceptual system, so language is an ideal proof of how the system works. Metaphors are not just words that we use to conceive a message. They affect the way in which we understand the world and how we unconsciously structure different concepts taken from our own culture. For example, in the metaphor ARGUMENT IS A WAR, we can win or lose arguments, and we also see the other person as an opponent, so we must defend ourselves from their attacks.

However, if we saw an argument as a dance, the way in which we would conceive the concept of argument would be completely different (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:3-4).

This means that we have to be aware that metaphors are part of how the human brain works and conceives concepts. It is not just a matter of language (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980:5; see also Pérez-Hernández (2011, 2013a, 2013b, 2014, 2019) for examples of cognitive and metaphorical analyses that reveal how these cognitive strategies influence conceptualization within a specific field (i.e. advertising)).

The other important part of the analysis belongs to another category: similes. A simile is a comparison between two entities. It is closely related to metaphors because two different concepts are presented and linked in some way in both figures of speech. There is a distinction made by Glucksberg (1999: PAG) in which we can distinguish two types of simile: 'literal similes' and 'metaphorical similes'. However, Croft and Cruse (2004: 211) divided the concept of simile into simply similes and statements of similarity. The main difference between them is the ability to transform the simile into a metaphor. Statements of similarity cannot be changed into a metaphor without changing the meaning of it. For example "My house is like yours" would not be the same as "My house is yours" (Croft and Cruse, 2004:211). But if we take "John is like a lion", there is correspondence with the metaphor "John is a lion". This would be what Croft and Cruse consider a simply simile.

To sum up this previous explanation, a literal simile cannot be transformed into a metaphor because there would be a significant change in its meaning. However, a metaphorical (or figurative) simile can be changed into a metaphor without alteration of the meaning (Cruse: 2008:140).

According to Glucksberg (2001:29), "a metaphor is an indirect comparison, whereas a simile is a direct comparison". Some authors relate this view to Aristotle, for whom similes are metaphors, but not the other way round.

There are three different theories regarding the relation between simile and metaphor. As it is said before, both figures are closely related and that is why many theories have been made about them. In the following lines, the three theories will be explained: metaphors as implicit similes, similes as implicit metaphors and similes and metaphors as distinct concepts.

-Metaphors are implicit similes:

This view is considered the 'classical view' by Glucksberg. A metaphor is transformed into a simile and there is no variation. This process is made because metaphors are usually false. By doing this transformation, the metaphor can be understood by terms of its correspondent simile. The simile



makes the metaphor true. The only requirement for this view to be accepted is that the metaphor should be valid (Croft and Cruse, 2004:211-12).

Within this view of metaphors as implicit similes, Glucksberg distinguished three different models: The contrast model, salience imbalance and structural alignment.

As it will be said later, similes are considered to have the following form: X is like Y. X would be the topic and Y a comment on it. Therefore, we have a topic-comment relation within a simile (Glucksberg: 2001:31).

-Similes are implicit metaphors:

This view has to do with class-inclusion statements. They are metaphors that identify one concept with another in terms of class. Taking the example above ("John is a lion"), the features of a lion have been used to define John. This would mean that John is strong and courageous. However, this is something subjective and it has to do with the mental aspect. The basic form of a metaphor is X is Y, whereas a simile is represented by X is like Y. So this view maintain the interpretation of a simile by translating it into a metaphor (Croft and Cruse, 2004:212).

-Similes and metaphors are distinct:

This view considers similes and metaphors as two different concepts, although they include two domains. However, the simile involves a resemblance relation, while we find a correspondence relation in a metaphor. There are also differences regarding the context and the type of metaphor and simile. Following this distinction, two main differences are found: the first one deals with the restricted or open mapping of the two domains that are involved; and the second one is related to the way in which the domains are considered.

When a simile has a restricted mapping, there is an explicit specification of the resemblance relation between the two domains that makes possible the interpretation of it (1). With an open mapping, there is no list of correspondences between domains (2).

(1) And I know Anderson follows her like a puppy.

(2) His sarcasm could have shred paper.

The other difference deals with the way in which the two domains in a metaphor or a simile are interpreted. It is important to consider that in a simile, the two domains are distinct and we understand them separately. But on the other hand, the domains in a metaphor are a correspondence of the other and they are considered together (Croft and Cruse, 2004: 212-3).

Moreover, metaphor and similes can be combined to create certain effects. Two main combinations can be distinguished: metaphor within simile and simile within metaphor (Croft and Cruse, 2004:215).

-Metaphor within simile: The simile is used to specify the source domain in this case.

E.g. "This is really twisting my brain like a dishrag."

In the previous example, the simile is used to determine the way in which the brain is being twisted. This mode is used to obtain a narrower meaning of the source frame.

-Simile within metaphor: The feature that makes this type of simile more complex is that the second term of it is a metaphor.

E.g. "He looked tired, as if life had pushed him too far."

This example shows that there is a simile introduced by the word "as". However, the comparison is made by means of a metaphor. This phenomenon makes the simile more difficult to understand than the other type of combination explained above.

Cruse (2008:139) distinguished six types of simile although his work is focused on the three first ones. The following list exemplifies the variety within the form of a simile:

1. X (be) like Y: *John is like a lion.*
2. X (V) like Y: *The steel shone like silver.*
3. X (be) (adj.) like Y: *Her sin was dry like parchment.*
4. X looks/sounds/feels/tastes/smells like Y: *My mouth tasted like stale cigarettes.*
5. Sentence<sup>1</sup> as if Sentence<sup>2</sup>: *Louise kept on stroking the sofas and chairs as if they were animals in a zoo.*
6. Sentence<sup>1</sup> like Sentence<sup>2</sup>: *He acts like he thinks he's the boss.*

There is another fact to take into account. They are called 'speculations'. They are not considered true similes and they have to be analysed as speculations as happens with the following instance: *He is walking like a drunk man.* It is not a simile because the man can be literally drunk, so this will be applied to the category of speculations (Cruse, 2008:141).

So these are the two concepts that the essay will work with. Both metaphors and similes are very important in our everyday life and they are part of our basic use of language. Moreover, they contribute to the new area of Ecolinguistics. Ecolinguistics is a recent area of study that deals with ecology and language. They are two completely

different areas of study, but Ecolinguistics is in charge of making relations between them. As Aran Stibbe asserts (2015:1), "language influences how we think about the world." Therefore, both fields are not so different in the end.

Ecolinguistics is closely related to the main topic of this work because it is a discipline that analyses the impact of language on the environment. The language of advertising affects our world directly. Corporations use language to make people want certain products that can damage diverse ecosystems. We will see this later in the analysis of the different metaphors and similes, and how they affect people and nature.

Language is the tool which configures our way of thinking. There is a lot of influence of language in human's thoughts and ideas, and everything is related to the economy and the ecological destruction (Stibbe, 2015:2). Language is also the way to encourage people to buy things they do not actually need, and it is also the method to stop consumerism.

Language is linked directly to the way that we think, and this also affects the way in which we behave. That is the reason why language is so important to ecology, because we can act protecting the system or we can contribute to destroy it (Stibbe, 2015:1). Then, Ecolinguistics criticises those languages that provoke the destruction of the environment.

As Ecolinguistics is a new field of study which deals with the relation between natural sciences and humanities, there is no homogeneity because many approaches and perspectives can be distinguished. They also follow different methodologies and they have their own aims (Stibbe, 2015:1).

The first approach to Ecolinguistics took place in a talk in 1970 where Einar Haugen talked about: "interactions between any given language and its environment". (Fill, 1998: 3). During another talk in 1990, Michael Halliday also mentioned the language's implication regarding environmental problems. As a result of these two contributions, two different approaches appeared:

- A metaphorical approach to ecology transferred to languages (Haugen, 1972)
- A biological approach which studies the involvement of language in environmental problems (Halliday, 1992)
- Ecology as metaphor

This approach deals with the disappearance of minor languages. More and more languages are vanishing in the recent times. This field of study encourages linguists to investigate about language diversity in order to prevent the extinction of more endangered languages (Fill, 1998: 5).

Linguists devoted to this type of approach study the connection between language and environment. It was soon spread among German experts who called it *ecological linguistics*. This new field of study was also broadened. It deals not only with language, but also with culture in general (Fill, 1998:6).

#### -Language and environmental problems

This field of study is in charge of the investigation about how languages have an impact on the environment, and how it is affected by them. This is the approach that will be used in this work to analyse the different metaphors which appear in the documentary that is the object of our study. They will be studied in the analysis section and there will be an investigation about how they affect people and the way they think.

Ecolinguistics is a new field of study that is divided in many sub-fields. They should be studied in depth, so a lot of investigations must be done. It involves theoretical, methodological and empirical studies of language in order to obtain new perspectives and ideas. That is why there is still so much work to be done (Fill, 1998: 13).



#### **4. Objectives and methodology**

This paper is devoted to the analysis of different metaphors and similes that appear in the documentary under consideration. This corpus-based study is mainly focused on assessing the impact and communicative power of those metaphors and similes in presenting a controversial topic like the nature of present-day corporations. Both metaphors and similes will be explained in terms of data tables. These tables will follow the same structure and categories in order to facilitate their understanding. Their vitality will be shown as a way of being aware of the importance of language. They will be divided into superior categories, and inside those categories, there will be a distinction between positive and negative descriptions.

The main objectives that are pursued in this study are the following:

- To offer a deep analysis of the documentary "The Corporation" to see how language affects people's understanding of a notion like that of present-day corporations and its subsequent opinion and behaviour towards them, which may have consequences on the general well-being of the people and the planet.
- To give evidence about the use of metaphors and similes on the description of the notion of corporation and to show how these linguistic and cognitive resources can be used to present the same notion either positively or negatively depending on the nature of the source domains chosen for each metaphor/simile.
- To offer some evidence about the importance of Ecolinguistics studies and their potential to offer analyses of language that reveal conceptualizations of reality that may be negative for the well-being of the planet and its inhabitants.

To achieve the aims stated above, this work will follow a qualitative and inductive methodology. The analysis will be qualitative because it offers in-depth descriptions of the metaphors and similes in the documentary in order to reveal their conceptual fabric vitality and potential entailments; also because it brings deeper understanding to human behaviour and to people's lived experiences (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The main aim is to study the impact of language on people. A qualitative research is needed to provide us with the results we want.

The inductive method will be used in the analysis. This analysis will go from particular examples to the formulation of generalizations. The investigation will obtain general ideas and conclusions from specific instances taken of the documentary.



## **5. Corpus**

The corpus of analysis for this study is the documentary called "The Corporation" by Mark Achbar, Jennifer Abbott and Joel Bakan. It was released in 2003 and it shows an investigation about different corporations of the USA. It is based on the book *The Corporation: The Pathological Pursuit of Profit and Power* by Joel Bakan. The documentary contains many interviews to different experts, such as Noam Chomsky, in order to offer a panorama of the reality of these American companies.

The film aims to display the impact and damage that corporations are able to make to our society; especially to under-developed countries where people are so desperate to earning money that they accept working for them even under the worst conditions.

Another main objective of the documentary is to show the growth of these entities. Corporations have experienced an exponential growth, and this affects us directly. Their power is huge and they are all over the world, so that is why they have control over many things.

The documentary has received many awards due to the good work of the directors. It is a very complete film about the reality of corporations, and it provides us with a general idea of how they work.





## 6. Analysis

This section will be devoted to the analysis of the different metaphors and similes that appear in the documentary. This study will be done by means of data tables. Each table will include six categories:

- Source frame: It is the domain projected onto the target domain. It is the concept needed to understand the target domain.
- Modes that the source domain appears in: They are the ways in which the previous concept is shown in the documentary (e.g. visual image, sound and spoken language)
- Target domain: It is the conceptual frame understood by means of the source frame. It is the concept that the metaphor wants to explain by identifying it with the source domain.
- Modes that the target domain appears in: They are the forms in which the concept explained above is shown throughout the movie, i.e. visual image, sound and spoken language.
- Vitality: This category delimits the impact and how powerful a metaphor or a simile is. The higher the number of modes (image, sound, spoken language) in which the metaphor or simile appear, the more powerful the metaphor or simile will be.
- Entailment: It is the implicit consequences that the metaphors and similes have; their logical outcome. It explains the effect that these elements have on people and on their behaviour.

Both metaphors and similes will follow the same structure and they will be analysed by the same method.

The object of this section will be to offer an exhaustive analysis of twenty-two metaphors and four similes found in the corpus in terms of the six categories defined above. The information will be organized thematically. In this connection, the metaphors and metonymies under analysis belong to the following semantic fields: people, animals, objects and processes. In addition, within each of the four thematic categories, we will further include information about the positive or negative axiology of the metaphors and similes. As will be shown, sixteen of them have negative axiological values and ten have a positive implicit meaning.

## 6.1. METAPHORS AND SIMILES DISPLAYING HUMAN SOURCE DOMAINS

Metaphors and similes related to people are the most recurring. Ten metaphors and similes have been found within this category. As can be seen in the next two subsections, four of them are axiologically positive and six of them have negative interpretations. Within each subsection, the objects of analysis will follow the order in which they appear throughout the documentary.

### 6.1.1. Metaphors and similes displaying positive axiology

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE TEAMS
<b>Source frame:</b> a team
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Moving visual image: a football team playing a match. Spoken language: "Some of them are blocking and tackling, some of them are running the ball, some throwing the ball..." Sound: it can be heard in the background people cheering in a stadium.
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "We all have a common purpose which is to succeed as an organisation."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is high because the team is presented in different modes: visual image, spoken language and sound.
<b>Entailment:</b> The corporation works like a team and they all have the same purpose, so they work together to achieve their goals. There is teamwork within the organisation. It is also assumed that they all have complicity and they are altogether for the same aims.

Table 1. CORPORATIONS ARE TEAMS

<b>Simile:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE LIKE FAMILY UNITS
<b>Source frame:</b> a family
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Image: moving image of a family working together doing the laundry. Spoken language: "The corporation is like a family unit."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "The corporation is like a family unit."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the source domain appears in two different modes: moving image and spoken language.
<b>Entailment:</b> People in a corporation work together to achieve the same objectives. Teamwork is very present in a corporation, and everybody should do their part in order to obtain good results. As it is said in the documentary, they work together for common purposes.

*Table 2. CORPORATIONS ARE LIKE FAMILY UNITS*

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE PEOPLE
<b>Source frame:</b> a person
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: A man from a corporation says: "You can't deprive a person of life liberty of property. We are a person."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "A corporation is a person."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is low because the source domain only appears in one mode: spoken language.
<b>Entailment:</b> You have to consider the corporation as a person so you can empathise with them, and also understand them and their acts.

*Table 3. CORPORATIONS ARE PEOPLE*

After this metaphor, this idea of the corporation being a person is further explained. It is also said that a corporation is a legal person. This is another metaphor that could have been included in the previous table: CORPORATIONS ARE LEGAL PEOPLE.

The aim of these two metaphors is very clear. They want to give a closer image of corporations. They want to make these companies more human, so we assume that they have the same rights as an individual. It is another member of our society, and the only difference is that it has neither body nor soul. The purpose of some brands is to identify human features with them. For instance, the brand "Nike" is linked to a young and energetic person.

It is believed that corporations also have beliefs, feelings or political interests, but the truth is that they only pursue one objective: making as much money as they can. This principle reflects that although a corporation is considered to be a person, it has no moral and it acts without taking care of the rest.

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE RESCUERS
<b>Source frame:</b> a rescuer
<p><b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b></p> <p>Spoken language: "Come and rescue us from our circumstance. And so when Nike comes in, they are regarded by everybody in the community as an enormous God sent."</p> <p>Visual image: image of people from non-developed countries.</p> <p>Sound: extracts from home-made videos in which we can hear people shouting and complaining about their situation.</p>
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<p><b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b></p> <p>Spoken language: "When Nike comes in, they are regarded as an enormous God sent."</p>
<p><b>Vitality:</b></p> <p>The vitality is high because there are three modes in which the source domain appears: spoken language, visual image and sound.</p>
<p><b>Entailment:</b></p> <p>Although their salaries are ridiculous, corporations save these people and they give them money in order not to starve to death. We see them as good companies that make people's life easier.</p>

Table 4. CORPORATIONS ARE RESCUERS

### 6.1.2. Metaphors and similes displaying negative axiology

The following metaphors and similes give a negative image of corporations. They are more powerful and they are aimed to criticise certain aspects of these big companies.

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE EXPLOITERS
<b>Source frame:</b> exploiter
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Visual image: people working. Papers where we can see figures which are the workers' salaries. A checklist in which we can read: "Manual of mental disorders." Spoken language: "This is the reality. It's the science of exploitation."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "It's the science of exploitation." Visual image: Image of people working in a factory that belongs to a certain corporation.
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the source domain appears in two modes: visual image and spoken language.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations take advantage of their power and they exploit people by paying them ridiculous salaries and making them work long hours. They do not have mercy because, as it has been said before, they want to get as much profit as they can. The vitality is medium, but the images are very telling and they are harsh to see. So, it is a powerful metaphor that criticise the way in which corporations behave.

Table 5. CORPORATIONS ARE EXPLOITERS

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE CRIMINALS
<b>Source frame:</b> criminals
<p><b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b></p> <p>Spoken language: "We put together a list of the top corporate criminals of the 1990s.  We look all the criminal fines that corporations paid in that decade."  A man saying the name of different corporations and the fine they got.</p> <p>Visual image: there is a paper in which we can read "The top 100 corporate criminals of the 1990s."  Logos of different corporations and the price they had to pay for their illegal actions.</p> <p>Sound: we can hear in the background music of suspense.</p>
<b>Target domain:</b> corporations
<p><b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b></p> <p>Spoken language: "We look all the criminal fines that corporations paid."</p>
<p><b>Vitality:</b></p> <p>The vitality is high because the source domain appears in different modes: spoken language and visual image. Moreover, the music that is played while this metaphor is being developed helps to increase its vitality.</p>
<p><b>Entailment:</b></p> <p>Corporations perform illegal actions in the same way that criminals do. They do not behave according to the law and they had to pay for their mistakes. Corporations are guilty and they do illegal movements which are not well seen by society. In this metaphor, corporations are identified with criminals. This affects negatively in the way they are seen by consumers.</p>

Table 6. CORPORATIONS ARE CRIMINALS

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE PSYCHOPATHS
<b>Source frame:</b> psychopath
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "One of the questions that comes up is to what extent could a corporation be considered to be a psychopathic." Visual image: we can see again the checklist of mental disorders with many characteristics of psychopaths.
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "It would not be that difficult to draw the transition between psychopath and the corporation. We are going to go through the characteristics that define this particular disorder one by one and see how they might apply to corporations. (...) Corporation is the prototypical psychopath."
<b>Vitality:</b> Vitality is medium because the source domain only appears in two modes: spoken language and visual image.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations are considered not to be mentally stable. They are identified with people with a mental disorder so they are considered to be irrational. They have all the features of a psychopath and that is something that would change people's opinion for the worse. However, as a corporation is formed by many people, nobody has the moral responsibility for their actions.

*Table 7. CORPORATIONS ARE PSYCHOPATHS*



<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE PIRATES
<b>Source frame:</b> pirates
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "We saw the corporations were the pirate." Visual image: Image of a skull using binoculars and seeing the name of different corporations.
<b>Target domain:</b> corporations
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "We saw the corporations were the pirate." Visual image: Names of different corporations appearing on the screen.
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the source domain appears in two modes: spoken language and vital image.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations are considered to be pirates because they do not care about the welfare of people. They are concerned of their own interests. We can also link the idea of pirates with corporations, and we assume that if it is necessary, corporations steal and do illegal things to achieve their purposes.

Table 8. CORPORATIONS ARE PIRATES

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE DOMINANT INSTITUTIONS
<b>Source frame:</b> a dominant institution
<b>Modes that the source frame appears in:</b> Spoken language: "The corporation is today a dominant institution."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "The corporation is today a dominant institution." Visual image: We can see on the screen the logos of different corporations.
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is low because the source domain only appears in one mode: spoken language.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations act like dominators and they control people's lives. They tell what to do and they are powerful enough to drive the world as they want to. They have a lot of influence over everything, including governments.

Table 9. *CORPORATIONS ARE DOMINANT INSTITUTIONS*

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE MANIPULATORS
<b>Source frame:</b> a manipulator
<b>Modes that the source frame appears in:</b> Spoken language: "It's the notion of manipulating children into buying the products."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "It's the notion of manipulating children into buying the products."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is low because there is only one mode in which the source frame appears in: spoken language.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations manipulate people in order to make them buy their products. They do not care about the age of the people and they impose their products over children or adults. They manipulate consumers because they want them to buy what they sell.

Table 10. *CORPORATIONS ARE MANIPULATORS*

## 6.2 METAPHORS AND SIMILES DISPLAYING ANIMAL SOURCE DOMAINS

There are only 4 metaphors in this category of animals. Moreover, they are all negative and their entailments are against the corporations' benefit. So, when the documentary makes a reference to animals, it is always with the aim of highlighting a negative aspect of corporations.

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE EAGLES
<b>Source frame:</b> an eagle
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Moving visual image: an eagle flying. Spoken language: "The eagle, soaring, clear-eyed, competitive, prepared to strike but not a vulture, noble, visionary, majestic, that people can believe in and be inspired by, that creates such a lift that is source." Sound: sound of the eagle's wings flapping and sound of the eagle tweeting.
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "It is a good logo for the principal company."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is high because the eagle appears in three different modes: visual image, spoken language and sound.
<b>Entailment:</b> The corporation has the same nature as an eagle, so that is why the corporation is something in which people can believe in, because it is noble. But this metaphor also represents that the corporation is competitive, and that is the reason why the corporation does not always behave fairly. The corporation wants to reach its objectives no matter what. It can be considered a bit aggressive, so that is why this metaphor contributes to a negative image of corporations. Moreover, many people are afraid of eagles, they are not animals in which people trust.

Table 11. CORPORATIONS ARE EAGLES

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE WHALES
<b>Source frame:</b> a whale
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Moving visual image: a whale taking its head out of the sea. Spoken language: "I think of a whale, gentle, big fish which could swallow you in an instant." Sound: the sound of some waves in the sea.
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> There is no reference to corporations.
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is high because the whale is represented in three different modes: visual image, spoken language and sound. However, there is no reference to corporations at all. You have to infer the reference by knowing the topic of the documentary.
<b>Entailment:</b> The corporation may seem a peaceful institution, but it can cause a lot of damage because it has the potential to do it. This metaphor makes you think of the corporation as something harmless, but with the abilities to be so. People may think that corporations are implicitly dangerous. Although a corporation is apparently calm, it has the ability to be very harmful.

Table 12. CORPORATIONS ARE WHALES

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE SHARKS
<b>Source frame:</b> shark
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Moving visual image: a shark swimming in the ocean. Spoken language: "The corporation is a shark."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "The corporation is a shark."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the shark appears in two modes: visual image and spoken language.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations are designed efficiently to achieve what they want. They are connected to sharks because they are aggressive in nature and they act according to their personality. They are not doing things wrong, they are just performing things in the way they are. It is assumed that they do not want to act maliciously, they just operate in the way they know.

Table 13. CORPORATIONS ARE SHARKS

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATION'S SPIES ARE PREDATORS
<b>Source frame:</b> predators
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "We are predators." Visual image: image of a film where many people smartly dressed are skating towards the same aim. They carry briefcases and they seem to be in a hurry.
<b>Target domain:</b> corporation's spies
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> <b>Spoken language:</b> "We are predators."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the source domain appears in two modes: spoken language and visual image.
<b>Entailment:</b> There are spies working for some corporations in order to investigate other companies and take advantage of the information that they get. The way in which these spies behave can be understood because they have the same nature as predators. They do not care about the others and they just do their job and complete their tasks. As happens with predators, they act without taking care of anything but themselves. They are carless about other people's feelings.

Table 14. CORPORATION'S SPIES ARE PREDATORS

### 6.3 METAPHORS AND SIMILES DISPLAYING OBJECTS AS SOURCE DOMAINS

Nine references to objects have been found in "The Corporation". There are five positive metaphors and similes, and four negative. There is variety in this category, and there is no pattern to follow. As in previous sections, we are going to see the positive elements first.

#### 6.3.1. Metaphors and similes displaying positive axiology

<b>Simile:</b> CORPORATIONS AS PIECES OF THE SOCIETY'S JIGSAW
<b>Source frame:</b> society (seen as a jigsaw)
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Visual image: a jigsaw being completed. Spoken language: the narrator says: "if you remove it, the picture is incomplete." Sound: sound of different pieces of a jigsaw being placed to complete the image.
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "I see the corporation as part of the jigsaw in society as a whole."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is high because the jigsaw is present in different modes: visual image, spoken language and sound.
<b>Entailment:</b> The corporation is something that society needs in order to be complete. Without the corporation, society cannot work properly because there would be a lack of something. Moreover, it can be considered as a game. Corporations play with people in the same way that people consider a jigsaw a game.

Table 15. CORPORATIONS AS PIECES OF THE SOCIETY'S JIGSAW

<b>Simile:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE LIKE THE TELEPHONE SYSTEM
<b>Source frame:</b> the telephone system
<p><b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b></p> <p>Image: Electricians working with wires and climbing a post. There is also an image of the world with a line connecting different capital cities. Moreover, there is a picture of a satellite in the middle of the outer space.</p> <p>Spoken language: "Like the telephone system."</p>
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<p><b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b></p> <p>Spoken language: "It reaches almost everywhere. It is extraordinary powerful, pretty hard to avoid and it transforms the lives of people on the balance for the better."</p>
<p><b>Vitality:</b></p> <p>The vitality is medium because the source domain appears in two modes: image and spoken language.</p>
<p><b>Entailment:</b></p> <p>Corporations have spread all over the world and they are very powerful. They are present in every country and they have many things under their control. They are compared to the telephone system because it is something that we need, and that we cannot escape from.</p>

*Table 16. CORPORATIONS ARE LIKE THE TELEPHONE SYSTEM*



<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE GIFTS
<b>Source frame:</b> a gift
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "The corporation was considered a subordinate entity that was a gift from the people in order to serve the public good." Visual image: image of a book where we can read: "prayed for the privilege of being incorporated."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "The corporation was a gift."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the gift only appears in two modes: spoken language and visual image
<b>Entailment:</b> This metaphor makes us think of corporations as something good. They are gifts that would be positive for people because they would achieve things that everybody wants. Corporations are there for the public good and interests.

Table 17. CORPORATIONS ARE GIFTS

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE MACHINES
<b>Source frame:</b> machine
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "The corporation is an externalising machine."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "The corporation is an externalising machine."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is low because there is only one mode in which the source domain appears: spoken language.
<b>Entailment:</b> A corporation is designed in the same way as machines. They are efficient and they act in order to achieve some purposes. They do not think, they only perform following the rules in order to obtain what they want. Their most outstanding characteristic is that they are efficient, and people like that.

Table 18. CORPORATIONS ARE MACHINES

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE STRUCTURES
<b>Source frame:</b> structure
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Visual image: there are images of different buildings and skyscrapers. Spoken language: "A corporation is simply an artificial legal structure."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "A corporation is simply an artificial legal structure."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the source domain appears in two modes: visual image and spoken language.
<b>Entailment:</b> The corporation is considered a structure and that is something that makes us think that it is something very well organised. Everybody has a role inside the corporation and they work together doing the task they are devoted for. Hierarchy and order are very important within a corporation. Everybody has a specific role. Everything in a corporation is precise and studied before hand in order not to break that structure.

*Table 19. CORPORATIONS ARE STRUCTURES*

### 6.3.2. Metaphors and similes displaying negative axiology

The following instances of metaphors have negative implications. We can appreciate that all the entailments are negative, and that affects directly the consumers' conceptualization of corporations.

<b>Metaphor:</b> HARMFUL CORPORATIONS ARE BAD APPLES
<b>Source frame:</b> apples
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Visual image: apples on a tree. A man eating an apple. Moving image of apples being collected from the tree. Spoken language: they say that they have to get rid of bad apples. Sound: a song where the word "apple" appears.
<b>Target Domain:</b> harmful corporations
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Visual image: logos of different corporations. Spoken language: "They present the corporation as a paradox, an institution that creates great wealth but causes enormous, and often, hidden harms."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is high because apples appear in different modes: visual images, spoken language and music.
<b>Entailment:</b> Harmful corporations must be left behind because they dishonour the good nature of corporations as institutions which want to make wealth and good for people.

Table 20. HARMFUL CORPORATIONS ARE BAD APPLES

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE MONSTERS
<b>Source frame:</b> monsters
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Moving visual image: images of a film in which a monster is destroying everything. Spoken language: "They are monsters trying to devour as much profit as possible." Sound: People shouting afraid of the monster.
<b>Target domain:</b> corporations
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken languages: "Corporations are artificial creations. They are monsters."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is high because the source domain appears in three different modes: moving visual image, spoken language and sound.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations (like monsters) are aggressive and they want to have as much benefit as they can without taking care about the damage they are causing. They are not aware about how devastating they can be.

Table 21. CORPORATIONS ARE MONSTERS

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE CONTROLLING ENTITIES
<b>Source frame:</b> controlling entities
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "15 corporations would like to control the conditions of our life." Visual image: Logos of different corporations simulating that they are the stars in the American flag.
<b>Target domain:</b> corporations
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "15 corporations would like to control the conditions of our life." Visual image: Logos of different corporations in the American flag.
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the source domain appears in two modes: spoken language and visual image.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations are controlling and they want to manage people's lives. They have a lot of power and they want to use it to manipulate and to drive people's lives in the way that they want.

Table 22. CORPORATIONS ARE CONTROLLING ENTITIES

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE TOXIC PRODUCTS
<b>Source frame:</b> toxic products
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Image: photos of animals with deformities. <p style="padding-left: 40px;">There is also an image of a boy born without eyes.</p> Sound: melancholic music.
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "These chemicals produce cancer (...) and some other toxic effects."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the source domain appears in two modes: image and sound.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations are portrayed as something toxic and dangerous for people's health. They are something that is better to have far away. People are affected by them and the consequences of their acts affects not only people, but also animals and plants. This metaphor shows a really negative side of corporations.

*Table 23. CORPORATIONS ARE TOXIC PRODUCTS*

#### 6.4. METAPHORS AND SIMILES DISPLAYING PROCESSES AS SOURCE DOMAINS

There are only two metaphors and one simile in this category. The majority of them are negative, but the positive will be the first to be analysed.

##### 6.4.1. Metaphors and similes displaying positive axiology

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE PROGRESS
<b>Source frame:</b> progress
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "It is responsible for progress and good life." Visual image: Image of a film in which an impressive, shining and huge character is playing with the sun. Sound: a choir is singing something similar to opera.
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "The corporation was inevitable, indispensable and it is responsible for progress and good life."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is high because the source domain appears in three modes: spoken language, visual image and sound.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations are seen as something good that would make people to progress in their lives. This is a positive view of corporations. This image makes people trust corporations and buy their products.

Table 24. CORPORATIONS ARE PROGRESS

#### 6.4.2. Metaphors and similes displaying negative axiology

<b>Simile:</b> CORPORATIONS DO WITH PEOPLE THE SAME AS DR. FRANKENSTEIN DID WITH HIS CREATION
<b>Source frame:</b> Dr. Frankenstein's creation
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Image: moving image of <i>Dr. Frankenstein's</i> film, when the monster is attacking the doctor. Spoken language: "Dr. Frankenstein's creation has overwhelmed and overpowered him, as the corporate form has done with us." Sound: It can be heard the soundtrack of the film.
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "Dr. Frankenstein's creation has overwhelmed and overpowered him, as the corporate form has done with us."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality of this simile is high because the source domain appears in three different modes: moving image, spoken language and sound.
<b>Entailment:</b> Corporations are something created by people. However, there would be a moment in which they will overtake society and they will be uncontrollable. This moment is coming and happening nowadays, because corporations are becoming more and more powerful and we cannot delimit the impact that they have on us.

Table 25. CORPORATIONS DO WITH PEOPLE THE SAME AS DR. FRANKENSTEIN DID WITH HIS CREATION

<b>Metaphor:</b> CORPORATIONS ARE ILLNESSES
<b>Source frame:</b> illness
<b>Modes that the source domain appears in:</b> Image: image of a hospital. Spoken language: "Industry is largely responsible for this overwhelming epidemic of cancer."
<b>Target domain:</b> the corporation
<b>Modes that the target domain appears in:</b> Spoken language: "Industry is largely responsible for this overwhelming epidemic of cancer."
<b>Vitality:</b> The vitality is medium because the source domain appears in two modes: image and spoken language.
<b>Entailment:</b> This metaphor creates a negative image of corporations. They are compared to killers because they expose people to toxic areas although they know they are harmful. It is a matter of time that those people die because of that. This is why they are compared to an illness, because sooner or later they catch you and this has terrible consequences in people's health. Moreover, corporations do not feel guilty about these facts, they are only worried about making money.

*Table 26. CORPORATIONS ARE ILLNESSES*

As a conclusion, negative metaphors and similes are more powerful. The difference between the number of positive and negative elements is not remarkable, but the negative ones have more vitality and they are more deeply explained. The documentary is focused on the negative side of corporations, so the negative expressions are much more present than the positive ones.

The general entailment of this whole section is that corporations have a negative part that most people do not see. "The Corporation" offers us a more realistic view of how the big corporations behave, and it makes us be aware of their impact and power on society.

From a cognitive and linguistic point of view, it is specially significant that the negative image of corporations is implicitly communicated through the use of highly vivid and visual metaphors and similes like those listed and described in this section. The powerful evocative power of metaphors allows the author of this documentary to convey his message in a very effective and moving manner, thus shaking the



conscience of the audience about the reality of corporations. It is hardly imaginable to convey the same negative image in such an effective and elegant manner by means of literal language.

## **7. Conclusion**

"The Corporation" documentary analyses different aspects of corporations and how they behave in relation to society and the environment. Language is very important to conceive an effective message so that is why this study has been focused on the use of metaphors and similes to talk about corporate issues.

This essay has analysed twenty-two metaphors and four similes related to corporations and how they use language to create certain effects on people. These figures of speech have been divided into four semantic fields: people, objects, animals and processes. There is no pattern among them, but it is important to highlight that all of them want to underline one negative aspect about corporations. The metaphors and similes identifying corporations with animals are negative, so it can be concluded that whenever an animal is mentioned in the documentary, the reference will emphasise a negative feature of corporations. Moreover, although there are some elements that may seem positive, they use an ironic tone which implies a sarcastic comment. There is no remarkable difference between negative and positive elements, but negative metaphors have more vitality, and the positive ones always have a double meaning. The main purpose of the movie is to show the negative side of corporations and how harmful they are to our ecosystem. Ecolinguistics has a crucial role in this investigation because the way in which language is used throughout the documentary affects the environment directly.

"The Corporation" movie offers us a realistic view of how corporations behave and how they try to manipulate us through language to show a better image of themselves. As it has been said before, language is very powerful and in this particular case, it is used to depict the negative and real face of these big companies. They do not care about people, and they are not worried about the negative consequences of their production processes. They are only concerned about their own benefit and success.

To conclude, the importance of language is clear after this whole analysis of the documentary. Language is one of the most effective tools to convey a specific message and to reach certain purposes. It is key to be aware of the impact of language, and to know how to use it for the benefit of the society as a whole and the environment.



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## **9. Corpus**

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